

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-14 without prejudice or disclaimer of their subject matter, and add new claims 15-26 as indicated below. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1.-14. (Canceled)

15. (New) A method of manufacturing a semiconductor device, comprising:

providing a wafer substrate having a surface;

forming a first nitride layer over the wafer substrate;

providing a layer of photoresist over the first nitride layer;

patterning and defining the photoresist layer;

etching the first nitride layer unmasked by the photoresist to remove a portion of the first nitride layer to expose a portion of the substrate surface;

removing the photoresist layer; and

depositing a second nitride layer over the first nitride layer and the exposed substrate surface portion to form a nitride structure having a first thickness and a second thickness, wherein the first thickness includes a thickness of the first nitride layer, and wherein the first thickness is greater than a sum of the second thickness and the thickness of the first nitride layer.

16. (New) The method of claim 15, wherein the thickness of the first nitride layer is about 11 angstroms.

17. (New) The method of claim 15, wherein the thickness of the first nitride layer is less than about 11 angstroms.

18. (New) The method of claim 15, wherein the first nitride layer is grown at a temperature ranging from approximately 700 °C to approximately 900 °C.

19. (New) A method of manufacturing a semiconductor device, comprising:

- providing a wafer substrate having a surface;
- forming a first nitride layer over the wafer substrate;
- providing a layer of photoresist over the first nitride layer;
- patterning and defining the photoresist layer;
- etching the first nitride layer unmasked by the photoresist to remove a portion of the first nitride layer to expose a portion of the substrate surface;
- removing the photoresist layer; and
- depositing a second nitride layer over the first nitride layer and the exposed substrate surface portion to form a nitride structure having a first thickness and a second thickness, wherein the first thickness includes a thickness of the first nitride layer, and wherein a difference between the first thickness and the thickness of the first nitride layer is greater than a sum of the second thickness and the thickness of the first nitride layer.

20. (New) A method of manufacturing a semiconductor device, comprising:

- providing a wafer substrate having a surface;
- forming a first nitride layer over the wafer substrate;

providing a layer of photoresist over the first nitride layer;
patterning and defining the photoresist layer;
etching the first nitride layer unmasked by the photoresist to remove a portion of the first nitride layer to expose a portion of the substrate surface;
removing the photoresist layer; and
depositing a second nitride layer over the first nitride layer and the exposed substrate surface portion to form a nitride structure having a first thickness and a second thickness, wherein the first thickness includes a thickness of the first nitride layer, and wherein the first thickness is increased by an increase in a growing temperature of the first nitride layer.

21. (New) A method of manufacturing a semiconductor device, comprising:
providing a wafer substrate having a surface;
forming a first nitride layer over the wafer substrate;
providing a layer of photoresist over the first nitride layer;
patterning and defining the photoresist layer;
etching the first nitride layer unmasked by the photoresist to remove a portion of the first nitride layer to expose a portion of the substrate surface;
removing the photoresist layer; and
depositing a second nitride layer over the first nitride layer and the exposed substrate surface portion to form a nitride structure having a first thickness and a second thickness, wherein the first thickness is different from the second thickness, and wherein the first thickness is greater than a sum of the second thickness and the thickness of the first nitride layer.

22. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein the first thickness includes the first nitride layer.

23. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein the first nitride layer has a thickness of about 11 angstroms.

24. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein the first nitride layer is grown at a temperature ranging from approximately 700 °C to approximately 900 °C.

25. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein the first nitride layer has a thickness of less than about 11 angstroms.

26. (New) A method of manufacturing a semiconductor device, comprising:

- providing a wafer substrate having a surface;
- forming a first nitride layer over the wafer substrate;
- providing a layer of photoresist over the first nitride layer;
- patterning and defining the photoresist layer;
- etching the first nitride layer unmasked by the photoresist to remove a portion of the first nitride layer to expose a portion of the substrate surface;
- removing the photoresist layer; and
- depositing a second nitride layer over the first nitride layer and the exposed substrate surface portion to form a nitride structure having a first thickness and a second thickness, wherein the first thickness is different from the second thickness, and wherein the first thickness is increased by an increase in a growing temperature of the first nitride layer.